

## **ARTICLE 12**

### **SIGNS**

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## FAIRFAX COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE

## **ARTICLE 12**

### **SIGNS**

#### **PART 1      12-100    GENERAL PROVISIONS**

##### **12-101      Purpose and Intent**

The purpose of this Article is to regulate all exterior signs and interior signs placed for exterior observance so as to protect property values, to protect the character of the various communities in the County, to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community, to protect against danger in travel and transportation, to improve and protect the public health, safety, convenience and general welfare, and to further the stated purpose and intent of this Ordinance.

Any sign erected on a lot or building for the purpose of identification or for advertising a use conducted therein or thereon shall be an accessory use to the principal use.

It is further intended that all signs within a given development be coordinated with the architecture of the principal use in such a manner that the overall appearance is harmonious in color, form and proportion, and that the signs shall be structurally sound so as to ensure the safety of the general public.

##### **12-102      Permit Required**

1. For the purpose of this Ordinance, all signs, to include those set forth in Sect. 103 below, are deemed to be accessory uses as defined in Article 20 and, unless specifically qualified, shall be located on the same lot with the principal use. Any sign authorized by this Ordinance is allowed to contain non-commercial content in lieu of any other content.
2. In keeping with the purpose and intent of this Article, all signs shall be regulated in accordance with the provisions that follow and in accordance with the provisions of the zoning district in which the sign is to be located.
3. No sign, except for those signs listed in Sect. 103 below, shall be painted, constructed, erected, remodeled, relocated, or expanded until a sign permit for such sign has been obtained in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 below.
4. No permit for any sign shall be issued unless the sign complies with the following regulations: this Article 12; Chapter 61 of The Code, Buildings; and Chapter 7 of Title 33.1 of the Code of Virginia.

##### **12-103      Permit Not Required and Temporary Signs To Include Political Campaign Signs**

1. The following operations shall not be considered as creating a sign and therefore shall not require a sign permit:
  - A. The changing of the advertised copy or message on an approved painted or printed sign or billboard or a theater marquee and similar approved signs which are specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy.

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- B. Painting, repainting, cleaning and other normal maintenance and repair of an approved sign or sign structure, unless a structural alteration is made.
2. No Fairfax County sign permit shall be required for any of the following signs; however, all other applicable regulations of the Zoning Ordinance and those set forth in Chapters 61 and 102 of the Code of the County of Fairfax, the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, and Chapter 7 of Title 33.1 of the Code of Virginia shall apply to such signs.
- A. Signs of a constituted governmental body, including traffic signs and signals or similar regulatory devices or warnings at railroad crossings. Such signs may be located off-site.
  - B. Memorial tablets or signs, and historic markers erected by duly constituted and authorized public authorities. Such signs may be located off-site.
  - C. Signs required to be maintained by law or governmental order, rule or regulation, with a total area of all such signs not to exceed twelve (12) square feet on any lot or parcel.
  - D. Signs erected by a public agency which identify or give direction to public uses. Such signs may be freestanding or building-mounted and may be located off-site. If freestanding, no such sign shall exceed six (6) feet in height.
  - E. Flags of the United States, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Fairfax County, other countries and states, the United Nations Organization or similar organizations of which this nation is a member, the President or Vice-President of the United States, religious groups, civic organizations and service clubs, provided, however, that there shall be no more than three (3) flags on any one lot.

In addition, any commercial or industrial use on a parcel of two (2) acres or more may display its corporate emblem in the form of a flag, provided:

    - (1) That there is no more than one such flag on any parcel, and
    - (2) That the area of such corporate emblem shall be deducted from the permitted area of the building-mounted sign.
- For the purpose of this provision, a flag shall be a piece of fabric, cloth or bunting varying in size and of distinctive color and design which hangs loose from a flagstaff or pole and is used as a symbol or emblem.
- F. Small signs which post or display address numbers as required by Chapter 102 of The Code. In addition, small signs which identify the name and/or address of the occupant of a single family dwelling unit. Such additional signs shall be limited to one (1) per dwelling unit, shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area, may be either building-mounted or freestanding, and if freestanding shall not exceed four (4) feet in height or be located closer than five (5) feet to any lot line.
  - G. Small signs displayed on site for the direction or convenience of the public, such as signs which direct traffic or identify the location of restrooms, public telephones,

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freight entrances or parking areas or limitations on the use of drive-through windows.

No such sign shall exceed two (2) square feet in area or be located closer than five (5) feet to any lot line. Notwithstanding the above limitations, signs displayed on site to identify elements and spaces of accessible facilities shall be permitted and shall conform to the specifications as required in the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC) and the Public Facilities Manual.

- H. Small signs placed by a public utility showing the location of underground facilities. No such sign shall exceed two (2) square feet in area.
- I. Seasonal displays and decorations, for events such as religious holidays and the Fourth of July, not advertising a product, service or entertainment.
- J. Signs located on-site warning the public against hunting, fishing, trespassing, dangerous animals, swimming or the like. Such signs may be freestanding or attached to a fence, and such shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area. Such signs shall be posted at approximate eye level, and shall not be located closer than five (5) feet to any street line.
- K. Signs accessory to an agricultural use located on a parcel of not less than twenty (20) acres for the purpose of identifying such agricultural uses or advertising the products thereof. No such sign shall exceed thirty (30) square feet in area, and all such signs on a given farm shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet in area. No such sign shall exceed eight (8) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any street line.
- L. Signs erected by a public agency for the purpose of identifying a geographical area or giving directions and distances to commercial districts in which are located the following types of commercial facilities: restaurants, motels and establishments for the servicing of motor vehicles; provided, that no such sign shall give the name, direction or distance to any specific business establishment. Such signs may be located off-site.
- M. Small signs, above grade, which identify accessible parking for persons with disabilities as required by the provisions of Sect. 11-102 and the Public Facilities Manual.
- N. Signs posted by a service station or service station/mini-mart identifying the hours of operation of the service station establishment. Such signs may be posted only during the period of an emergency gasoline shortage as determined by the County Executive in accordance with the provisions of Sect. 10-4-4 of The Code. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) per establishment and no such sign shall exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area.
- O. Signs which denote religious, charitable, fraternal, military or service organizations located within the County. Such signs may be freestanding and may be located off-site, provided, however, that no one (1) individually chartered organization may have more than two (2) such signs. A sign denoting a single chartered organization shall not exceed eight (8) square feet in area or six (6) feet in height. A number of such signs may be placed on one structure, provided, however, the area of each

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individual sign does not exceed four (4) square feet in area, and the structure does not exceed forty (40) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height.

- P. Signs posted by a service station or service station/mini-mart for the purpose of identifying such station as being authorized to perform State safety and/or emission control inspections. Such signs shall not exceed ten (10) square feet in area and may be either building-mounted or attached to an existing authorized freestanding sign structure. If attached to an authorized freestanding sign structure, such signs shall not exceed the height of the existing sign and shall comply with the provisions of Sect. 2-505.
  - Q. Signs erected by a hospital for the purpose of giving directions and distance to the hospital. Each sign may include the name of the hospital, directional arrow and distance. Such signs shall be limited to ten (10) per hospital and may only be located within a one-mile radius of the hospital property. No such sign shall exceed eight (8) square feet in area or six (6) feet in height.
  - R. When erected by a public agency or County recognized revitalization organization, there may be freestanding signs, located within or in proximity to a commercial revitalization area, as designed in the adopted comprehensive plan or by the Board of Supervisors, which identify the area or give directions and/or distances to commercial areas or centers within such area. No such sign shall give the name, direction, or distance to any specific business or identify a specific product. Such signs, which may include a banner affixed to the signpost, shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet in area or twenty (20) feet in height. In addition, within the commercial revitalization area, there may be separately erected banners, erected by a public agency or County recognized revitalization organization, identifying the area or announcing area-wide events, but no individual businesses or products. Such banners shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet in area or twenty (20) feet in height. All banners shall be securely affixed at the top and the bottom so as to preclude any fluttering or rotation by the movement of the atmosphere. The banners shall also be subject to the applicable outdoor advertising provisions of the Code of Virginia. When erected by a public agency, such signs and/or banners shall not require a sign permit, but when erected by a County recognized revitalization organization, a sign permit shall be required.
3. Except where specifically qualified below, no permit shall be required for any of the following temporary signs; however, all other applicable regulations of the Zoning Ordinance and those set forth in Chapters 61 and 102 of The Code of the County of Fairfax, the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and Chapter 7 of Title 33.1 of the Code of Virginia shall apply to such signs.
- A. Official notices or advertisements posted by or under the direction of any public or court officer in the performance of his official duties, or by trustees under deeds of trust, deeds of assignment or other similar instruments; provided, that all such signs shall be removed not later than ten (10) days after the last day of the period for which the same are required to be displayed in order to accomplish their purpose.

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- B. Political campaign signs erected on election day at officially designated polling places for a period not to exceed twenty-four (24) hours.
- C. Temporary signs, announcing a campaign, drive or event of a civic, philanthropic, educational, historical or religious organization. Such signs may be either building-mounted or freestanding and shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area. If freestanding, no such sign shall exceed six (6) feet in height or be located closer than five (5) feet to any street line. Such signs may be located on or off-site, and may be posted for a period not to exceed fourteen (14) days.
- D. Real estate signs advertising the sale, rental or lease of a premise or part of the premises on which the signs are displayed. Such signs shall not exceed a total area of four (4) square feet or a maximum height of six (6) feet when advertising a single family detached, attached or multiple family dwelling unit; a total area of twelve (12) square feet or a maximum height of eight (8) feet when advertising a multiple family dwelling development; a total area of thirty-two (32) square feet or a maximum height of eight (8) feet when advertising a commercial or industrial property or a residential property containing a minimum of twenty (20) acres.

Such signs shall not exceed one (1) in number per property, except that there may be two (2) such signs on a corner lot. Such signs shall be removed within seven (7) days of the settlement, rental or lease.
- E. Freestanding, off-site directional sign(s) providing information as to the location of private garage or yard sales or of real estate that is for sale or for rent. Such signs shall be subject to the following conditions:
  - (1) No such sign shall exceed three (3) square feet in area or four (4) feet in height.
  - (2) Such signs shall not exceed five (5) in number per property or yard sale being advertised, provided that no two (2) signs advertising the same property and located beside the right-of-way of any one street shall be located closer than five hundred (500) yards from each other.
  - (3) Signs giving direction to a private garage or yard sale shall not be posted more than two (2) weekends or legal holidays in any one calendar year.
  - (4) All such signs shall be permitted only if, and in only those locations, approved by the Virginia Department of Transportation.
  - (5) Nothing in this provision shall be construed to authorize the posting of such signs upon trees, utility poles, traffic control signs, lights or devices or in any place or manner prohibited by the provisions of this Article.
- F. Temporary signs associated with construction or alterations of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings shall be permitted in accordance with the following:

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- (1) Temporary signs for a new residential, commercial or industrial development, which identify the name of the proposed development, the character of the building(s), enterprise(s), or the purpose for which the development is intended. Any such sign shall be limited to one (1) in number for each development, may be freestanding or building-mounted and shall be limited to a maximum area of sixty (60) square feet, and if freestanding, a maximum height of ten (10) feet.

In addition, temporary construction signs for the proposed development or additions/alterations to an existing development, other than those provided for in Par. 3F(2) below, which identify the architects, engineers, contractors, realtors and other individuals or firms involved with the construction shall be permitted but shall not include any advertisement of any product. Any such sign, not to exceed one (1) per street frontage, may be freestanding or building-mounted, shall be limited to a maximum area of thirty-two (32) square feet, and if freestanding, a maximum height of eight (8) feet. No such sign shall be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.

Such sign shall be located on the site of the development and shall be removed within fourteen (14) days following completion of construction. No such sign shall be displayed for a period in excess of two (2) years, except if construction has not been completed, a sign permit may be obtained for an additional period as may be approved by the Zoning Administrator.

- (2) Temporary signs for home improvements to individual single family dwelling units. Any such sign may identify the contractor, architect, or firm involved with the home improvement but shall not include any advertisement of any product. Such sign shall be located on the lot of the dwelling unit with the home improvement, shall not exceed a total area of four (4) square feet and a maximum height of three and one-half (3 ½) feet, shall be limited to one (1) in number per dwelling unit, and may be freestanding. No such sign shall be displayed prior to commencement of the one-site home improvement work, and such sign shall be removed within seven (7) days after the home improvement is complete. However, in no event shall such sign be displayed for a period in excess of six (6) months.

- G. Temporary signs announcing such happenings as 'Grand Opening', 'Under New Management', or 'Going Out of Business'. Such signs may be either freestanding or building-mounted and shall be subject to the following conditions:

- (1) A maximum of twenty (20) square feet in area;
- (2) If freestanding, not to exceed eight (8) feet in height or located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line;
- (3) For a period not to exceed fourteen (14) days;
- (4) Only in a location which has been given written approval by the Zoning Administrator;



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- (5) On a given property, such temporary sign may be displayed only one (1) time by the same proprietor in a twelve (12) month period; and
- (6) Only upon the posting of a \$100.00 bond, with surety satisfactory to the Zoning Administrator, to ensure the removal of the sign(s) at the termination of the fourteen (14) day period.

In addition to the above, bunting, banners, pennants and other decorative materials may be displayed on a building temporarily. Such decorative material shall be securely attached to the building; shall not exceed twice the allowable building-mounted sign area for the use which it identifies; and shall be subject to the provisions of Paragraphs (3) through (6) above.

- H. Temporary signs identifying a temporary farmer's market as may be approved under the provisions of Part 8 of Article 8. Such signs may be freestanding or building-mounted; shall not exceed one (1) in number per use; shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and, if freestanding, exceed eight (8) feet in height. Such signs may be erected only for the duration of the temporary special permit issued to the temporary farmer's market, and shall be located only as approved by the Zoning Administrator. Such signs may be erected only upon the posting of a \$100.00 bond, with surety satisfactory to the Zoning Administrator, to ensure the removal of the sign upon expiration of the temporary special permit.
- I. Temporary signs identifying an open-air produce stand as may be approved under the provisions of Part 9 of Article 8. Such signs may be freestanding or building-mounted; shall not exceed one (1) in number per use; shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and, if freestanding, exceed eight (8) feet in height. Such signs may be erected only for the duration of the special permit approved for the open-air produce stand, and shall be located only as approved by the Zoning Administrator. Such signs may be erected only upon the posting of a \$100.00 bond, with surety satisfactory to the Zoning Administrator, to ensure the prompt removal of the sign upon expiration of the special permit at the end of each season as approved by the BZA.
- J. Temporary signs advertising the sale of seasonal products such as Christmas trees, pumpkins, and fireworks as may be approved under the provisions of Part 8 of Article 8. Such signs may be either freestanding or building-mounted, and the total area of all such signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet. If freestanding, such signs shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line. Such signs shall not be posted for a period that exceeds twenty-one (21) days.
- K. Temporary signs affixed to or clearly visible through windows in commercial or industrial establishments advertising the sale or promotion of specific products, services or events. Such signs shall be temporary in construction, materials and method of attachment, and shall be removed promptly following the sale or promotion. The aggregate of all such signs at a given establishment shall not cover

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more than thirty (30) percent of the total window area through which the signs are clearly visible or affixed.

L. Temporary political campaign signs may be permitted off-site in any district subject to the following conditions:

- (1) No one such sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area, and no freestanding sign shall exceed eight (8) feet in height.
- (2) One (1) sign permit shall be required for all temporary political campaign signs for each candidate or organization.
- (3) A \$5.00 non-refundable sign permit fee shall be required and, prior to the issuance of a permit, a \$100.00 bond, with surety to the satisfaction of the Zoning Administrator, shall be posted with the Zoning Administrator to ensure removal of such signs in accordance with the time period(s) set forth below.
- (4) The sign permit number assigned to the applicant shall be affixed in the lower right hand corner of each sign.
- (5) No signs shall be erected for more than seventy-five (75) days prior to the nomination, election or referendum which they purport to advertise.
- (6) All signs shall be removed within fifteen (15) days after the nomination, election or referendum.
- (7) Nothing in this provision shall be construed to authorize the posting of political campaign signs upon trees, utility poles, traffic control signs, lights or devices, or in any place or manner prohibited by the provisions of this Article.

### **12-104 Prohibited Signs**

The following signs are prohibited in any zoning district and in any area of the County. Where applicable, these prohibitions shall apply to those signs permitted by the provisions of Sect. 103 above.

1. Any portable signs except such signs that are permitted by the provisions of Sect. 103 above.
2. Any sign that violates any provision of any law or regulation of the Commonwealth of Virginia or the United States relative to outdoor advertising.
3. Any sign that violates any provision of Chapter 61 of The Code, Buildings and the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.
4. Any sign or illumination that does not meet the performance standards for outdoor lighting set forth in Part 9 of Article 14.

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5. Any sign of which all or any part is in motion by any means, including fluttering, rotating or set in motion by movement of the atmosphere. This prohibition shall not apply to the hands of a clock, a weather vane, flags as provided for in Par. 2E of Sect. 103 above, or those temporary signs approved by the Zoning Administrator as provided for in Par. 3G of Sect. 103 above.
6. Any sign displaying flashing or intermittent lights, or lights of changing degrees of intensity of color or moving copy. This prohibition shall not apply to signs which display time, temperature, weather or environmental conditions, but only when the sign does not constitute a public safety or traffic hazard as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
7. Any sign so placed that it obstructs any window, door, fire escape, stairway, ladder, opening or access intended for light, air, ingress to, or egress from any building.
8. Any sign that is attached to a tree, whether on public or private property, except official notices or announcements as provided in Par. 3A of Sect. 103 above.
9. Any sign that is attached to a rock, stone, tree, fence, stump, pole, mile-board, milestone, danger-sign, guide-sign, guidepost, highway sign, historical marker, building or other object lawfully within the limits of any highway, except official notices or announcements as provided in Par. 3A of Sect. 103 above, warning signs as provided in Par. 2J of Sect. 103 above, and signs as provided for in the Commercial Revitalization District regulations of Appendix 7.
10. Any sign which by reason of its location, position, size, shape or color may obstruct, impair, obscure, interfere with the view of, or be confused with, any traffic control sign, signal or device erected by a public authority or where it may interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic. To those ends, no sign shall use the words 'Stop', 'Slow', 'Caution', 'Yield', 'Danger', 'Warning', or 'Go' when such sign may be confused with a traffic control sign used or displayed by a public authority.
11. Any sign located in the vision triangle formed by any two (2) intersecting streets, as regulated by the provisions of Sect. 2-505.
12. Any sign that projects beyond a lot line.
13. Any sign that overhangs and has a minimum clearance less than ten (10) feet above a walkway or fifteen (15) feet above a driveway, alley or travel lane, unless a lower clearance is specifically approved by the Zoning Administrator.
14. Except as qualified below, any sign attached to, painted, or displayed on a vehicle/trailer that is an arrow, or other such directional symbols or language, for example, "Turn Left Here," that provides directions to a use on the lot in which the vehicle/trailer is parked or to an adjacent lot; or any sign attached to, painted, or displayed on a vehicle/trailer that is parked twenty-five (25) feet or less from any public street line and is located on the same lot, or an adjacent lot, as the establishment to which the sign identifies. The Zoning Administrator may approve a request to allow the parking of vehicles/trailers with such signs within the twenty-five (25) foot setback when the sign owner has adequately demonstrated that there are no on-site parking spaces that are greater than twenty-five (25) feet from the public street line.

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The twenty-five (25) foot setback shall not apply to the parking of the one commercial vehicle that may be allowed in an R district pursuant to Sect. 10-102 of this Ordinance.

### **12-105 Sign Measurements**

1. Except as qualified below, the area of a sign shall mean and shall be computed as the entire area within a single continuous rectilinear perimeter of not more than eight (8) straight lines enclosing the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblems or a figure of similar character together with all material, color or lighting forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed.

The area of a sign(s) located on a raceway shall be computed in accordance with the provisions of Par. 2 below.

2. The area of building-mounted signs composed of individual letters and/or symbols shall be computed in accordance with one of the following methods:
  - A. If the space between the proposed individual letters and/or symbols is less in dimension than the width of the largest unit, the computation shall be made in accordance with a strict application of the provisions of Par. 1 above.
  - B. If the space between the proposed individual letters and/or symbols is greater than the width of the largest unit, the computation may be based on the total area within rectangular enclosures surrounding each individual unit.
3. The area of a sign designed with more than one (1) exterior face shall be computed in accordance with one of the following methods:
  - A. If the sign faces are separated by an interior angle of forty-five degrees (45°) or greater, all faces shall be included in computing the area of the sign.
  - B. If the sign faces are separated by an interior angle that is less than forty-five degrees (45°), the computation of the area of the sign shall be as follows:
    - (1) The area of one (1) face shall be used when the two (2) faces are equal in area.
    - (2) The area of the larger face shall be used when the two (2) faces are unequal in area.
  - C. If the sign faces are parallel to one another, the computation of the area of the sign shall be as follows:
    - (1) The area of one (1) face shall be used when the interior distance or space between the two (2) faces is eighteen (18) inches or less.
    - (2) The area of one (1) face and the area of one (1) side or interval between faces shall be used when the interior distance or space between the two (2) faces is greater than eighteen (18) inches.

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4. The supports, uprights or structure on which any sign is supported shall not be included in determining the sign area unless such supports, uprights or structure area are designed in such a manner as to form an integral background of the display; except, however, when a sign is placed on a fence, wall, planter, or other similar structure that is designed to serve a separate purpose other than to support the sign, the entire area of such structure shall not be computed. In such cases, the sign area shall be computed in accordance with the provisions of Par. 1 above.
5. Unless specifically qualified, the area of any sign permitted by Sect. 103 above shall not be calculated in determining allowable sign area.
6. The height of a sign shall be calculated as the maximum vertical distance from the uppermost extremity of a sign or sign support to the average ground level at the base of the sign.

### **12-106 Calculation of Allowable Sign Area**

In those instances where allowable sign area for building-mounted signs is based on building frontage, the following rules shall govern the determination of building frontage and allowable sign area:

1. On buildings housing only one (1) tenant or multiple tenants that access the building via a common outside entrance(s), building frontage shall be that one face or wall of a building which is architecturally designed as the front of the building and which contains the main entrance for use by the general public.

In instances where building frontage cannot be clearly determined due to the building design, location and/or orientation, an average of the linear feet of those walls in questions shall be used in calculating allowable sign area.

2. On buildings housing more than one (1) tenant where each tenant has its own outside entrance(s), building frontage for each tenant shall be that one architecturally designed perimeter wall that contains that tenant's main entrance for use by the general public to the area occupied by that tenant.

In instances where a tenant occupies an area which has more than one (1) architecturally designed wall located on the perimeter of the building, only that one (1) wall which contains the primary entrance for use by the general public shall be used in calculating allowable sign area.

In instances where it cannot be clearly determined which perimeter wall contains the primary entrance for use by the general public, an average of the linear feet of those walls in question shall be used in calculating allowable sign area.

3. As an alternative to Par. 2 above, a differing allotment of sign area may be assigned to the various tenants upon the receipt, by the Zoning Administrator, of a written authorization from the owner or authorized management firm of the building(s). As part of the written authorization, the owner or authorized management firm shall submit a schematic of the comprehensive signage plan to include the buildings as well as the proposed location and dimensions of all signs.

In no instance shall the total combined sign area for all signs exceed the maximum allowable sign area for the building as determined in accordance with the provisions of Par. 2

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above. In addition, the maximum allowable sign area for any one tenant shall not exceed 200 square feet, except that a tenant, which has building frontage that results in an allowable sign area greater than 200 square feet and occupies an area with more than one perimeter wall containing a main entrance for use by the general public, may place a maximum of 200 square feet of allowable sign area on each such perimeter wall; however, in no instance shall the square footage of signage on any such wall exceed one and one-half (1 1/2) times the length of such wall.

4. Regardless of the height, number of stories or number of tenants in a building, building frontage shall be determined by one measurement of the linear feet of the wall(s) at a height that is not greater than ten (10) feet above grade.

### **12-107 Structural Requirements and Performance Standards**

No sign shall be erected unless it complies with the structural requirements as specified in the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and Chapter 61 of The Code, Buildings, and with the performance standards as specified in Article 14 of this Ordinance.

### **12-108 Maintenance and Removal**

1. All signs and components thereof shall be maintained in good repair and in a safe, neat and clean condition.
2. The Building Official may cause to have removed or repaired immediately without written notice any sign which, in his opinion, has become insecure, in danger of falling, or otherwise unsafe, and, as such, presents an immediate threat to the safety of the public. If such action is necessary to render a sign safe, the cost of such emergency removal or repair shall be at the expense of the owner or lessee thereof as provided in Chapter 61 of The Code, Buildings.
3. Any sign located on property which becomes vacant and is unoccupied for a period of two (2) years or more shall be deemed abandoned. An abandoned sign shall be removed by the owner of the sign or the owner or lessee of the property. If the owner or lessee fails to remove the sign, the Zoning Administrator shall give the owner fifteen (15) days' written notice to remove it. Upon failure to comply with this notice, the Zoning Administrator may initiate such action as may be necessary to gain compliance with the provisions of this Article.

### **12-109 (Deleted by Amendment #95-283, Adopted October 30, 1995, Effective October 31, 1995 at 12:01 AM)**

### **12-110 Nonconforming Signs**

1. Signs lawfully existing on the effective date of this Ordinance or prior ordinances, which do not conform to the provisions of this Ordinance, and signs which are accessory to a nonconforming use shall be deemed to be nonconforming signs and may remain except as qualified below. Except as provided for in a Commercial Revitalization District, such signs shall not be enlarged, extended or structurally reconstructed or altered in any manner; except

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a sign face may be changed so long as the new face is equal to or reduced in height and/or sign area.

2. Nothing in this Section shall be deemed to prevent keeping in good repair a nonconforming sign; provided, however, that no nonconforming sign which has been declared by the Building Official to be unsafe because of its physical condition, as provided for in Par. 2 of Sect. 108 above, shall be repaired, rebuilt or restored unless such repair or restoration will result in a sign which conforms to all applicable provisions of this Article.
3. No nonconforming sign shall be moved for any distance on the same lot or to any other lot unless such change in location will make the sign conform to the provisions of this Article.
4. Except as provided for in a Commercial Revitalization District, if a nonconforming sign is removed, the subsequent erection of a sign shall be in accordance with the provisions of this Article.
5. A nonconforming sign that is destroyed or damaged by any casualty to an extent not exceeding fifty (50) percent of its appraised value may be restored within two (2) years after such destruction or damage but shall not be enlarged in any manner. If such sign is so destroyed or damaged to an extent exceeding fifty (50) percent, it shall not be reconstructed except for a sign which would be in accordance with the provisions of this Article.
6. A nonconforming sign which is changed to or replaced by a conforming sign shall no longer be deemed nonconforming, and thereafter such sign shall be in accordance with the provisions of this Article.
7. A nonconforming sign shall be subject to the removal provisions of Par. 3 of Sect. 108 above. In addition, a nonconforming sign shall be removed if the structure to which it is accessory is demolished or destroyed to an extent exceeding fifty (50) percent of its appraised value.
8. The ownership of the sign or the property on which the sign is located shall not, in and of itself, affect the status of a nonconforming sign.

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### **PART 2      12-200    SIGN REGULATIONS BY USE AND DISTRICT**

The following regulations shall apply to all signs which require a sign permit by the provisions of this Article. The regulations are based on the zoning district in which the use and accessory sign are located, the use itself and the location of the use.

#### **12-201      Residential, Single Family Uses**

The following regulations shall apply to all signs which are accessory to single family residential uses, to include single family detached, single family attached and mobile home dwellings.

1. Unless otherwise qualified, permitted signs may be located anywhere on the lot of the use to which the sign is accessory.
2. Building-mounted signs may be permitted in accordance with Par. 2F of Sect. 103 above; however, such signs shall be flush against the building and shall not exceed a height of ten (10) feet above grade.
3. Illumination, if used, shall be white and not colored. All illumination shall be in conformance with the performance standards for outdoor lighting as set forth in Part 9 of Article 14.
4. Freestanding signs which identify the name of a single family residential subdivision or development shall be permitted at each major entrance thereto. Such signs shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height. More than one (1) sign may be placed at each major entrance; however, the aggregate area of all such signs shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet at each entrance.

#### **12-202      Residential, Multiple Family Uses**

The following regulations shall apply to all signs which are accessory to multiple family residential uses.

1. Unless otherwise qualified, permitted signs may be located anywhere on the lot of the use to which the sign is accessory.
2. Building-mounted signs identifying the name of the building and the address as required by Chapter 102 of The Code shall be permitted. Such signs shall be flush against the building and shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in area per building nor be located at a height exceeding thirty (30) feet above grade.
3. Illumination, if used, shall be white and not colored light. All illumination shall be in conformance with the performance standards for outdoor lighting as set forth in Part 9 of Article 14.
4. Freestanding signs which identify the name of a multiple family development shall be permitted at each major entrance thereto. Such signs shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height. More than one (1) sign may be placed at each major entrance; however, the aggregate area of all such signs shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet at each entrance.

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5. In addition to the signs permitted above, each multiple family development shall be permitted one (1) sign identifying a rental office. Such sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area, may be either building-mounted or freestanding, and if freestanding shall not exceed four (4) feet in height or be located closer than five (5) feet to any lot line.

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#### **Commercial Uses-General**

The following regulations shall apply to all signs which are accessory to permitted, special permit and special exception uses located in a C district or the commercial area of a P district, except as provided in Par. 12 of Sect. 207 below. The regulations of this section are supplemented by the provisions set forth in Sections 204, 205 and 206 below.

1. Building-mounted signs may be located anywhere on the surface of the walls or roof of the building, but no part of any sign shall extend above or beyond the perimeter of the building wall, parapet wall or roof, except as permitted by Par. 2 below. No sign shall be located on a chimney, flue, antenna, monopole, transmission tower or cable, smokestack, or other similar rooftop structures and mechanical appurtenances. A sign may be mounted flat against a rooftop penthouse wall or rooftop screening wall which is an integral architectural element of the building through the continuation of materials, color, and design exhibited by the main portion of the building. Such signs shall conform to the following:
  - A. No part of the sign shall extend above or beyond the perimeter of the penthouse wall or screening wall to which it is attached or project outward from the penthouse wall or screening wall.
  - B. The sign shall not extend more than twelve (12) feet above the lowest point of the wall, and shall be limited to identification signs consisting of an organizational logo and/or the name of a company or premises.
2. A building-mounted sign may extend beyond the wall of a building when such sign is erected at a right angle to the wall, does not extend into the minimum required yard and is not located closer than two (2) feet to any street line.
3. Signs may be located on the vertical face of a marquee, but no part of the sign shall extend above or below the vertical face. The bottom of a marquee sign shall be no less than ten (10) feet above a walkway or grade, at any point.
4. Unless further restricted by the provisions that follow, no freestanding sign shall exceed a height of twenty (20) feet.
5. Freestanding signs, where permitted, shall in no instance project beyond any property line or be within five (5) feet of the curb line of a service drive, travel lane or adjoining street. When located on a corner lot, a freestanding sign shall be subject to the provisions of Sect. 2-505.
6. Illumination of signs shall be in conformance with the performance standards for outdoor lighting as set forth in Part 9 of Article 14.

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7. Except as qualified herein, signs shall be limited to identifying or advertising the property, the individual enterprises, the products, services or the entertainment available on the same property where the sign is located.
8. Building-mounted signs on buildings housing only one (1) tenant or multiple tenants that access the building via a common outside entrance(s) shall not exceed one and one-half (1 ½) square feet of sign area for each of the first 100 linear feet of building frontage plus one (1) square foot of sign area for each linear foot over 100 linear feet of building frontage. No one sign, however, shall have a sign area in excess of 200 square feet.
9. Building-mounted signs on buildings housing more than one (1) tenant where each tenant has its own outside entrance(s) shall not exceed one and one-half (1 1/2) square feet of sign area for each linear foot of building frontage occupied by each tenant, except as provided for in Par. 3 of Sect. 106 above. The maximum allowable sign area for any one tenant, however, shall not exceed a total of 200 square feet, except that a tenant, which has building frontage that results in an allowable sign area greater than 200 square feet and occupies an area with more than one perimeter wall containing a main entrance for use by the general public, may place a maximum of 200 square feet of allowable sign area on each such perimeter wall; however, in no instance shall the square footage of signage on any such wall exceed one and one-half (1 1/2) times the length of such wall.
10. A shopping center shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign; provided, however, that a shopping center with frontage on two (2) or more major thoroughfares may have one (1) freestanding sign for each frontage on a major thoroughfare with a maximum of two (2) such signs. No freestanding sign(s), other than those noted above, shall be permitted for individual enterprises located within or on the same lot with a shopping center.
11. Service stations or service station/mini-marts may be allowed one (1) additional square foot of sign area on each gasoline pump for the sole purpose of identifying the specific product dispensed from that pump.
12. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Ordinance, motor vehicle fuel price signs required by the provisions of Article 4 of Chapter 10 of The Code shall be permitted, and the sign area of such sign(s) shall not be computed in the maximum sign area permitted by this Ordinance.
13. The following signs are permitted as accessory to office parks:
  - A. One (1) freestanding sign may be erected at each major entrance to an office park. Such sign(s) shall identify the name of the office park. No such sign shall exceed forty (40) square feet in area or twenty (20) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any street line.
  - B. One (1) freestanding building identification sign may be permitted for each detached building which houses a principal use within an office park. Such sign(s) shall be limited to identifying the name of the building and/or the individual enterprises located therein, the address, trademark or identifying symbol or any combination thereof. No such sign shall exceed twenty (20) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.

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- C. One (1) freestanding on-site directory sign may be permitted in close proximity to each major entrance of an office park. Such sign(s) shall be limited to identifying and providing directional information to the individual enterprises located within the office park. No such sign shall exceed fifteen (15) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any street line.
- 14. Hospitals shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign at each entrance. No freestanding sign shall exceed eighty (80) square feet in area or twelve (12) feet in height, or be located closer than five (5) feet to any lot line. Hospitals shall also be permitted one (1) building-mounted sign for each building entrance for the purpose of identifying a hospital function. No such sign shall exceed fifty (50) square feet in area. The Board may approve additional signs in accordance with Sect. 9-308.

### **12-204 Commercial and Industrial Uses in Sign Control Overlay Districts**

The following regulations shall supplement the provisions set forth in Sections 203 and 207, and shall apply to all uses located on commercially and industrially zoned land within those areas designated on the Official Zoning Map as a Sign Control Overlay District, which district is established by the provisions of Part 5 of Article 7.

- 1. Building-mounted signs shall be limited to the sign area as specified in Sections 203 and 207.
- 2. An individual enterprise with frontage on a primary highway or major thoroughfare which is not located within or on the same lot with a shopping center shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign. Such sign shall be limited to a maximum sign area of forty (40) square feet.
- 3. Shopping centers shall be permitted freestanding signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 10 of Sect. 203 above. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum sign area of forty (40) square feet.
- 4. Office parks shall be permitted freestanding signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 13 of Sect. 203 above.
- 5. Industrial parks shall be permitted freestanding signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 12 of Sect. 207 below.
- 6. Hospitals shall be permitted signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 14 of Sect. 203 above.

### **12-205 Commercial Uses With Frontage on Primary Highways and Major Thoroughfares**

The following regulations shall supplement the provisions set forth in Sect. 203 above and shall apply to all uses located on commercially zoned lands which have frontage on a primary highway or on a major thoroughfare as shown on the adopted comprehensive plan but which are not located in a Sign Control Overlay District.

- 1. Building-mounted signs shall be limited to the sign area as specified in Sect. 203 above.

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2. An individual enterprise which is not located within or on the same lot with a shopping center shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign. Such sign shall be limited to a maximum sign area of eighty (80) square feet.
3. Shopping centers shall be permitted freestanding signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 10 of Sect. 203 above. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum sign area of eighty (80) square feet.
4. Office parks shall be permitted freestanding signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 13 of Sect. 203 above.
5. Hospitals shall be permitted signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 14 of Sect. 203 above.

### **12-206 Commercial Uses in Other Commercial Areas**

The following regulations shall supplement the provisions set forth in Sect. 203 above and shall apply to all uses located on commercially zoned lands which are not located in a Sign Control Overlay District or which do not have frontage on a primary highway or on a major thoroughfare, except as provided in Par. 12 of Sect. 207 below.

1. Building-mounted signs shall be limited to the sign area as specified in Sect. 203 above.
2. No individual enterprise shall be permitted a freestanding sign.
3. Shopping centers shall be permitted freestanding signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 10 of Sect. 203 above. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum sign area of eighty (80) square feet.
4. Office parks shall be permitted freestanding signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 13 of Sect. 203 above.
5. Hospitals shall be permitted signs in accordance with the provisions of Par. 14 of Sect. 203 above.

### **12-207 Industrial Uses**

The following regulations shall apply to all signs which are accessory to permitted, special permit and special exception uses located in an I district, except as qualified by the provisions of Sect. 204 above and 208 below.

1. Building-mounted signs may be located anywhere on the surface of the walls or roof of the building, but no part of any sign shall extend above or beyond the perimeter of the building wall, parapet wall or roof, except as permitted by Par. 2 below. No sign shall be located on a chimney, flue, antenna, monopole, transmission tower or cable, smokestack, or other similar rooftop structures and mechanical appurtenances. A sign may be mounted flat against a rooftop penthouse wall or rooftop screening wall which is an integral architectural element of the building through the continuation of materials, color, and design exhibited by the main portion of the building. Such signs shall conform to the following:

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- A. No part of the sign shall extend above or beyond the perimeter of the penthouse wall or screening wall to which it is attached or project outward from the penthouse wall or screening wall.
  - B. The sign shall not extend more than twelve (12) feet above the lowest point of the wall, and shall be limited to identification signs consisting of an organizational logo and/or the name of a company or premises.
- 2. A building-mounted sign may extend beyond the wall of a building when such sign is erected at a right angle to the wall, does not extend into the minimum required yard and is not located closer than two (2) feet to any street line.
- 3. Building-mounted signs on buildings housing only one (1) tenant or multiple tenants that access the building via a common outside entrance(s) shall not exceed one (1) square foot of sign area for each linear foot of building frontage. No one sign, however, shall have a sign area in excess of 200 square feet.
- 4. Building-mounted signs on buildings housing more than one (1) tenant where each tenant has its own outside entrance(s) shall not exceed one (1) square foot of sign area for each linear foot of building frontage occupied by each tenant, except as provided for in Par. 3 of Sect. 106 above. The maximum allowable sign area for any one tenant, however, shall not exceed a total of 200 square feet, except that a tenant, which has building frontage that results in an allowable sign area greater than 200 square feet and occupies an area with more than one perimeter wall containing a main entrance for use by the general public, may place a maximum of 200 square feet of allowable sign area on each such perimeter wall; however, in no instance shall the square footage of signage on any such wall exceed one and one-half (1 1/2) times the length of such wall.
- 5. One (1) freestanding sign may be erected for each building that has frontage on a major thoroughfare; provided, however, a grouping of separate buildings that house only one (1) tenant shall not be permitted more than one (1) freestanding sign. A building that does not have frontage on a major thoroughfare shall not be permitted a freestanding sign.
- 6. Freestanding signs shall in no instance project beyond any lot line or be within five (5) feet of the curb line of a service drive, travel lane or adjoining street. When located on a corner lot, a freestanding sign shall be subject to the provisions of Sect. 2-505.
- 7. No freestanding sign shall exceed a maximum sign area of eighty (80) square feet or a height of twenty (20) feet.
- 8. Illumination of signs shall be in conformance with the performance standards for outdoor lighting as set forth in Part 9 of Article 14.
- 9. Except as qualified herein, signs shall be limited to identifying or advertising the property, the individual enterprises, the products, services or the entertainment available on the same property where the sign is located.

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10. Service stations or service station/mini-marts may be allowed one (1) additional square foot of sign area on each gasoline pump for the sole purpose of identifying the specific product dispensed from that pump.
11. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Ordinance, motor vehicle fuel price signs required by the provisions of Article 4 of Chapter 10 of The Code shall be permitted, and the sign area of such sign(s) shall not be computed in the maximum sign area permitted by this Ordinance.
12. The following signs are permitted as accessory to an industrial park:
  - A. One (1) freestanding sign may be erected at each major entrance to an industrial park. Such sign(s) shall identify the name of the industrial park. No such sign shall exceed forty (40) square feet in area or twenty (20) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any street line.
  - B. One (1) freestanding building identification sign may be permitted for each detached building on a commercially or industrially zoned lot within an industrial park. Such sign(s) shall be limited to identifying the name of the building and/or the individual enterprises located therein, the address, trademark or identifying symbol or any combination thereof. No such sign shall exceed thirty (30) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.
  - C. One (1) freestanding on-site directory sign may be permitted in close proximity to each major entrance of an industrial park. Such sign(s) shall be limited to identifying and providing directional information to the individual enterprises located within the industrial park. No such sign shall exceed twenty (20) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any street line.
13. Hospitals shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign at each entrance. No freestanding sign shall exceed eighty (80) square feet in area or twelve (12) feet in height, or be located closer than five (5) feet to any lot line. Hospitals shall also be permitted one (1) building-mounted sign for each building entrance for the purpose of identifying a hospital function. No such sign shall exceed fifty (50) square feet in area. The Board may approve additional signs in accordance with Sect. 9-308.

### **12-208 Special Permit, Special Exception Uses**

The following regulations shall apply to signs accessory to all uses which require approval of a special permit or special exception as set forth in Articles 8 and 9. In addition, the regulations shall apply to signs accessory to such uses where they are permitted by right and to existing such uses which were established prior to the effective date when a special permit or special exception was required for a given use in a given zoning district.

The BZA, in approving a special permit use, and the Board, in approving a special exception use, may specify the area, height, color or illumination of a sign accessory to such a use; but in no event shall the area or height of a sign exceed the limits prescribed below.

1. In all C districts, I districts and commercial areas of P districts, signs accessory to special permit and special exception uses shall be subject to the applicable provisions set forth in Sections 203, 204, 205, 206 and 207 above.

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2. In all R districts and the residential areas of all P districts, signs accessory to special permit and special exception uses shall be subject to the provisions set forth in the paragraphs that follow.

Illumination, if used, shall be white and not colored. All illumination shall be in conformance with the performance standards for outdoor lighting as set forth in Part 9 of Article 14.

Building-mounted signs shall be flush against the building and shall not extend above or beyond the perimeter of the wall or roof of the building to which they are attached.

A. Airports and heliports may be permitted:

- (1) Building-mounted signs not to exceed a combined total sign area of fifty (50) square feet, and
- (2) One (1) freestanding sign, not to exceed a sign area of forty (40) square feet or eight (8) feet in height. No such sign shall be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.

B. Churches, chapels, temples, synagogues, and other such places of worship (places of worship) including schools, monasteries and seminaries directly affiliated with such uses may be permitted:

- (1) Building-mounted signs not to exceed a combined total sign area of fifty (50) square feet and,
- (2) One (1) freestanding sign, with or without a reader board, provided, however, when more than one congregation of a place of worship shares the use of the same facility, two (2) freestanding signs, with or without a reader board, shall be permitted. No such sign shall exceed a sign area of forty (40) square feet or eight (8) feet in height or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.

C. Convenience centers may be permitted one (1) building-mounted sign not to exceed a sign area of twelve (12) square feet.

D. Country clubs, colleges, universities, all medical care facilities which have a capacity of fifty (50) beds or more, except hospitals, cultural centers, museums, congregate living facilities and independent living facilities may be permitted:

- (1) Building-mounted signs not to exceed a combined total sign area of fifty (50) square feet, and
- (2) One (1) freestanding sign not to exceed a sign area of forty (40) square feet or eight (8) feet in height. No such sign shall be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.

E. Establishments for scientific research and development may be permitted:



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- (1) Building-mounted signs not to exceed a combined total sign area based on one (1) square foot for each one (1) linear foot of building frontage, and
  - (2) One (1) freestanding sign not to exceed a sign area of forty (40) square feet or eight (8) feet in height. No such sign shall be located closer than fifty (50) feet to any lot line.
- F. Funeral chapels may be permitted:
- (1) One (1) building-mounted sign not to exceed a sign area of fifteen (15) square feet, and
  - (2) One (1) freestanding sign not to exceed a sign area of twelve (12) square feet or five (5) feet in height. No such sign shall be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.
- G. Hospitals shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign at each entrance. No freestanding sign shall exceed eighty (80) square feet in area or twelve (12) feet in height, or be located closer than five (5) feet to any lot line. Hospitals shall also be permitted one (1) building-mounted sign for each building entrance for the purpose of identifying a hospital function. No such sign shall exceed fifty (50) square feet in area. The Board may approve additional signs in accordance with Sect. 9-308.
- H. Offices in the R-30 District shall not be permitted a sign.
- I. Open-air produce stands may be permitted one (1) sign in accordance with the provisions set forth in Par. 3I of Sect. 103 above.
- J. Parking in R districts may be permitted one (1) sign not to exceed a sign area of four (4) square feet.
- K. Temporary farmer's markets may be permitted one (1) sign in accordance with the provisions set forth in Par. 3H of Sect. 103 above.
- L. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) facilities may be permitted building-mounted and freestanding signs as specifically approved by the Board.
- M. Any other use located in structures that have the exterior appearance of a single family detached dwelling may be permitted one (1) sign, either building-mounted or freestanding. Such sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet in area.
- (1) If building-mounted, such sign shall not exceed a height of ten (10) feet above grade.
  - (2) If freestanding, such sign shall not exceed a height of four (4) feet or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.

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- N. Any other use located in structures that do not have the exterior appearance of a single family detached dwelling and uses which are predominantly outdoor uses such as golf courses, marinas and cemeteries may be permitted one (1) building-mounted sign and one (1) freestanding sign. No such sign shall exceed a sign area of twelve (12) square feet and the combined total sign area for a given use shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet.
- (1) If building-mounted, such sign shall not exceed a height of twenty (20) feet above grade.
  - (2) A freestanding sign shall not exceed a height of ten (10) feet or be located closer than ten (10) feet to any lot line.

### **12-209 Accessory Service Uses**

Accessory service uses as permitted by the provisions of Part 2 of Article 10 shall be permitted one (1) building-mounted sign not to exceed fifteen (15) square feet in area for all such uses in a given building. Such signs shall be calculated as part of the sign area permitted for the building by the provisions of this Article.

### **12-210 Uses in P Districts**

The provisions set forth in the preceding Sections shall be applicable to signs accessory to uses in P districts. However, in keeping with the intent to allow flexibility in the design of planned developments, the following options may be applicable to signs in the P districts:

1. As an alternative, signs may be permitted in a P district in accordance with a comprehensive plan of signage subject to the approval of the Planning Commission following a public hearing conducted in accordance with the provisions of Sect. 18-109. The comprehensive plan of signage shall show the location, size, height and extent of all proposed signs within the P district or section thereof, as well as the nature of the information to be displayed on the signs.
2. In addition, within a PRC District, a plan for off-site directional signs which identify destinations or locations within the district such as commercial centers, residential areas, public uses or community facilities may be approved by the Planning Commission following a public hearing conducted in accordance with Sect. 18-109; provided, however, that written notice to property owners and adjacent property owners shall not be required. The plan for off-site signs shall show the location, size, height and extent of all signs encompassed within the plan as well as the nature of the information to be displayed on each sign. All such signs shall be located within the PRC District.
3. Any application submitted pursuant to Par. 1 or 2 above may be made by any property owner, owner of an easement, lessee, contract purchaser or their agent. Such application shall be accompanied by a statement setting forth the names of the record owners of the properties upon which such signs are proposed to be located and a fee as set forth in Sect. 18-106.

When such application requests permission to erect a sign on property owned by someone other than the applicant, then such application shall be accompanied by a written

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statement signed by the record owners of such properties which indicates their endorsement of the application.

4. The above-cited signage options shall be in accordance with the standards for all planned developments as set forth in Part 1 of Article 16. All proposed signs shall be in scale and harmonious with the development and shall be so located and sized as to ensure convenience to the visitor, user or occupant of the development while not adding to street clutter or otherwise detracting from the planned unit nature of the development and the purposes of architectural and urban design elements.

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### **PART 3      12-300    ADMINISTRATION**

#### **12-301      Permit Requirements**

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, no sign shall be erected, altered, refaced or relocated unless a sign permit has been approved by the Zoning Administrator.
2. Any sign erected under permit shall indicate in the lower right hand corner of the sign the number of the permit. The permit number shall be so affixed that it is legible from the ground.

#### **12-302      Permit Application**

The application for a sign permit shall be filed with the Zoning Administrator on forms furnished by the County. The application shall contain the identification and address of the property on which the sign is to be erected; the name and address of the sign owner and of the sign erector; drawings showing the design, dimensions and location on the building/site of the sign; and such other pertinent information as the Zoning Administrator may require to ensure compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance and other applicable ordinances of the County.

The application for a permit shall be accompanied by a filing fee made payable to the County of Fairfax in the amount of fifty dollars (\$50).

#### **12-303      Expiration of a Sign Permit**

1. A sign permit shall expire and become null and void if the sign is not erected within a period of twelve (12) months from the date of the permit.
2. In the event the sign is not erected within the twelve (12) month period, an application for extension of an additional six (6) month period may be made to the Zoning Administrator. Such an extension may be granted if the proposed sign is in accordance with current applicable regulations. If the proposed sign is not in accordance, the application for an extension shall be denied.

#### **12-304      Special Permits**

1. The BZA may grant a special permit to allow an increase in the height of a freestanding sign in a neighborhood or community shopping center where, in its opinion, the provisions of this Article would cause a hardship by virtue of topography. No such permit shall be granted that would permit a freestanding sign to extend to a height of more than twenty-six (26) feet above the center line elevation of the nearest street.
2. The BZA may grant a special permit to allow additional sign area, additional sign height, or a different arrangement of sign area distribution for a regional or super-regional shopping center where, in its opinion, the provisions of this Article would cause a hardship by virtue of topography or location of the regional or super-regional shopping center. No such permit shall be granted that would permit the total combined sign area for the regional or super-regional shopping center to exceed 125 percent of the sign area otherwise permitted by the provisions of this Article.

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3. In cases where an individual or grouping of enterprises are so located within a shopping center as not to have frontage visible from a street, the BZA may grant a special permit to allow building-mounted sign(s) for such enterprises to be erected at the entrances, arcades or interior malls. No such permit shall be granted that would permit the total combined sign area for the shopping center to exceed 125 percent of the sign area otherwise permitted by the provisions of this Article.

### **12-305 Special Exceptions**

In the C and I districts, the Board may approve, either in conjunction with the approval of a rezoning or as a Category 6 special exception, a modification or waiver of the sign regulations in accordance with Sect. 9-620.